

Town of Primrose Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee Minutes for September 28, 2009.

Attending: Dein, Elkins, Garfoot, Gibson, Haack, Hayward, J. Judd

Meeting called to order at 7:40 by Dein

1. Motion made by Hayward and seconded by Gibson to approve the minutes of August 17, with the following revision: “Elkins” be deleted from the list of members attending. Motion carried 6-0.

2. Standing made a presentation—showing approximate numbers of builds with substandard parcels and farmhouses. He also showed maps showing where building could occur according to the current Plan, and where it could occur with various possible changes in the Plan. These maps included various layer— e.g. where building could occur if it was prohibited in wetlands, hydric soils, soils classed 1-3, steep slopes, and woodlands. Various questions from the public and members of the commission were asked of Standing regarding the maps. The map depicting where building was prohibited under the current Plan was inaccurate as it did not show the building that could occur in wood land and pastures that could be reached without crossing agricultural land. Standing said he would correct that before the next meeting.

3. Discussion among Steering Committee Members:

Dien said that we need to decide on the number of builds we want, what we want the community to look like, and what we want to preserve.

Elkins said that the maps Standing presented as to how we could change to allow for more building looked like a radical departure from the building that has been allowed by the Plan, and that both voting and the survey indicated that a majority of residents wanted slow growth and liked the Plan the way it was. More people wanted less development than wanted more in the survey. We should have slow growth, protect agricultural land and rural atmosphere. Elkins thought we should leave the Plan much the way it is. Hayward said that we should design it to look like a rural community but not be so restrictive that no one can build.

Haack said that we can’t have farmland preservation without farmers.

We discussed what other things Standing could provide that might guide our decision making. We asked him to (i) correct the map showing where building could occur according to the current Plan so as to allow building in wood land and pasture accessible by road, (2), to show the difference in number of builds if we assigned densities according to whether the land-holdings were contiguous or non-contiguous, (3) to map building if building was to be prevented in contiguous woodlands greater than twenty acres, (4) to determine the true ‘farm residencies’, and (4) to map building if we prevent building on ridgetops.

4. Public Comment Period:

There should be a clarification of what houses do and do not count against the densities.

They should either count all houses on ag. land before 1981 or none.

If the Town really wants to bring down the price of land so it is affordable for farmers, they should reduce the lot size to 2 acres, and allow all splits to occur.

If the Town counts farm houses against the density, what about ones that have already been built?

The Town's policy regarding substandard parcels can't supercede the County's policy. As of January 1, 2010, an land use decision has to be consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

People talk about the Plan adopted as of 1981, but it was revised in 97, and that is what the Town goes by.

We should not go by a criterion of 'majority of income from farming' to define farm houses, since many people who are farmers don't make the majority of their income from farming.

Farmhouses should not count towards density, because they are worth so much less than a house in the city.

Hope the Town will try to find building sites for people who want to preserve some wood land or ag. land.

5. Next meetings were set for Monday October 19 and Oct. 26. The meeting on the 19th is to look at revisions to Drafts and the meeting for the 26th is for Standing to present the additional information requested.

6. Motion to adjourn made by Hayward, seconded by Gibson. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Martha Gibson.